



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
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March 12, 2003

To: State Board of Health Members
From: Don Sloma, Executive Director
Re: OUTREACH MEETINGS WITH LOCAL BOARDS OF HEALTH

Summary

Developing closer working relationships with local boards of health is among the state Board's ongoing interests. Our continuing effort to meet in local health jurisdictions around the state is one example. Five of our seven Board meetings in 2002 were in different local health jurisdictions. These included one joint meeting with the American Indian Health Commission at the Wa He Lut Indian School on the Nisqually Reservation, and one joint meeting with the King County Board of Health at SeaTac.

Another example is the Board's recently initiated effort to summarize several local board meeting minutes in each of our monthly "FYI" addenda to the state Board's agenda.

Last month, Chair Lake and I began a new effort to strengthen the state Board's knowledge of and relations with local boards—a series of face-to-face meetings between Chair Lake, me and perhaps other board members and as many local boards of health as possible. The attached letter was sent to each local board of health member in the state. It seeks an opportunity to come to each local board to hear local concerns. As of this date, we have met with local boards in Clallam, Pierce and Snohomish counties. Additional meetings are scheduled with local boards in Lewis, Island, Kittitas and Kitsap counties, and more are being planned.

I am happy to report that we are being well received, and that we are learning a lot about the sophistication and dedication on local boards.

A stable and secure funding source for public health activities tops the list of local board concerns so far. Other issues of concern include declining access to critical health services, especially for lower income populations, a desire to learn about and to share "best practices," and specialized environmental health concerns.

We have invited follow up comments from each board. We plan to summarize the concerns we hear for your reference in determining state Board priority projects for the coming biennium and possibly use them as an additional source of public input for the 2004 state health report.

Suggested Board Action:

None.